

A. B. SEE STIRS IRE OF COLLEGE GIRLS

Elevator Builder, Nevertheless, Renews Attack of Higher Education.

WRITE BADLY, HE SAYS

Prominent Women Educators Treat Criticism With Contempt or Laugh.

CALLED A PEEVISH MAN

Dean Gildersleeve Says Statements Are Extreme and Unreasonable.

College corridors buzzed with excitement and tingled with vexation yesterday over the published remarks of Alonzo B. See to the effect that higher education is all tomfoolery for women and teaches them to smoke cigarettes, paint their faces, use slang and make themselves otherwise objectionable. College presidents looked amazed and hurt, professors appeared to find in Mr. See's arraignment grounds for indignant refutation, while college girls took the elevator builder's remarks as somewhat of a joke, after they had recovered from their first shock of surprise.

Mr. See refused to budge one inch from the stand he had taken on the uselessness—indeed, harm—of the modern college on the mind, morals and manners of the modern girl.

For himself, Mr. See says he never uses a slang word—hates such short cuts to expression of thought; that he had practically no schooling and went to work at 13; that he wouldn't let his son go to college, though college graduates—boys, that is—are a pretty high type, even if they don't get in college the sort of things that help them in the future, and that he is writing a book—has been at it twenty years—on education.

Stands by His Gains.

All these facts were brought out in an interview literally dragged from Mr. See at his elevator offices in Vesey street. Scowling over his glasses, his eyebrows bristling and his straight, thin lips set in a hard line, Mr. See came into the outer offices to see reporters.

When bombarded with questions as to what he based his opinion of colleges and college girls on, Mr. See glared and then said that he had visited most of the colleges in the country and knew what he was talking about. He flatly refused to say whether he knew any graduates of women's colleges who had acquired all the atrocious habits attributed by him to the modern college girl.

"The English language, writing and spelling, are the most important things in the college course," Mr. See said. The next most important he refused to state. But he did say that some college girls write so badly that their parents cannot read their letters.

"In all my life I never had so much glare thrown on me," he urged as an excuse to escape. "A man offered to lend me rooms on the fifth floor so that I could hide up there from my reporters, but I won't use it. I'll meet everybody."

"Did you really mean that if you had your way you would burn all the women's colleges in the country?" he was asked.

"Oh, well, when I wrote that letter I did not know it was to be made public. Perhaps I would not have written it that way if I had. But I do say that every hour spent in women's colleges is a waste of time."

"This letter was a reply to one of the colleges asking for subscriptions to the endowment fund, the drive for which was to end December 6, but which will continue through to December 10 on account of the announcement by President Harding that that is to be 'Education Week.' The subscriptions received so far by Adelphi amount to about \$200,000, according to Dr. Frank D. Blodgett, its president.

Adelphi Girls Differ.

"We do not have any of the kind of girls Mr. See describes in his letter around here," said Dr. Frank D. Blodgett, president of Adelphi College. "I believe I know something about Mr. See. He is a successful man, has been a great helper in the Bedford Y. M. C. A. and no doubt believes what he says about college women. But he is misguided in his convictions. Mr. See must have been badly limited in his acquaintance with college girls or very unobservant. I can't say just what result his letter will have. The girls here are on the war-path, so are the teachers. There are

350 girls at Adelphi and they are a pretty nice bunch of girls."

At Hunter College, where hundreds of girls go daily, every student was either indignant or amused; it depended on her sense of humor. But Mr. George S. Davis, president of Hunter, declared that Mr. See's sentiments were untrue and outrageous. "They do not apply to this college nor to any college that I know of," he said, "and I can speak for Wellesley, Smith, Vassar, Barnard and many other women's colleges."

"It is the duty of every girl and woman to make herself look as attractive and pleasant as possible, and if a girl puts a little powder on her nose it doesn't harm her a bit. Mr. See's letter is that of an uneducated, peevish man."

Mrs. Mabel Shipman Douglass, dean of the New Jersey College for Women at New Brunswick, characterized Mr. See's statement as absurd. "I have absolute faith in the fundamental goodness of my girls, although I believe that some criticism is in a measure justified," she declared. "The college girl is just as good as she ever was."

Virginia C. Gildersleeve, dean of Barnard College, said: "It doesn't seem worth while to me to comment on any detail in Mr. See's letter, since he is evidently not acquainted with women's colleges, and his statements are so extreme and unreasonable. What he says seems to me to be convincingly refuted by the character and works of the thousands of graduates of women's colleges."

Abundant and Ill-Founded.

Miss Katherine MacMahon, adviser to women students and faculty instructor in Columbia School of Journalism, made this comment:

"Mr. See's statement about college women is absurd and ill-founded. His information about women's colleges is, to say the least, a bit incomplete. I have been a student and instructor, both in women's colleges and in universities, and I have neither learned nor taught the habits which Mr. See mentioned."

Mary Swartz Rose, professor of household arts, Teacher College, said: "The remarks of Mr. See seemed to be applied to men's colleges as well. Evidently Mr. See has never been near a woman's college. He condemns the entire feminine population of Brooklyn, as 95 per cent. of Brooklyn women don't go to college. He is very flattering in intimating that colleges have that much influence on public conduct. I believe that college women smoke less than other women, and in most cases those who do smoke learn to smoke before they come to college. Somebody should tell Mr. See 'where to get off,' if he would permit such language to be used."

Helen LePage, news editor of The Forward Bulletin, was terse and brief, saying: "When I read that letter it made me mad. What does any president of an elevator company know of girls' schools? College girls are not as bad as other girls."

Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University, said he did not think the letter of Mr. See was worth serious comment.

Special Dispatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, WELLESLEY, MASS., Nov. 23.—Alice Vin-

ton Waite, dean of Wellesley College, was not seriously impressed by the statement of A. B. See that burning would be an appropriate fate for girls' colleges. She said to-day:

"There could be no excuse for such ignorance in these days, when so many benefits from education are known and acknowledged, and this is so in the matter of higher education for women."

"These charges that college girls are characterized by smoking and by the use of slang and high heeled boots merely show that he must be preposterously unfamiliar with the conditions that actually exist at the girls' colleges of the country. It would be folly for us to take them seriously, and I don't believe any one can."

Opinions at Vassar.

Special Dispatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD, Poughkeepsie, Nov. 23.—Authorities at Vassar College were more amused than angered by the statement of A. B. See that he would burn all the women's colleges in the country if he had his way.

"It is quite evident from his name, as well as from his remarks, that he hasn't gone beyond the elementary grades himself," said Prof. Burgess Johnson. "He talks without knowledge and it is almost impossible for me to answer such statements without making myself as silly as he has proved himself to be."

"The letter," said Acting President Nettleton, "definitely raises a question as to whether women's colleges deserve support or not, and the answer to that may safely be left to the intelligent men and women of the public."

Miss Ella McCaleb, dean of the college, laughed when the letter was mentioned. "But it seems a very foolish letter to me," she said, "and one that shows an inadequate knowledge of the college graduate. I find the Vassar graduate, as well as the undergraduate, eager to work and not afraid of any kind of work."

"The letter was of unusual interest to Vassar and caused much amusement, because Vassar, like Adelphi, is engaged in a campaign for an endowment fund."

STIRES SAYS MACHINERY THREATENS HUMAN SOUL

Also Blames Religious Apathy on Indulgent Clergy.

Declaring the over-development of machinery is disastrous to the mind, heart, and character of modern humanity and that it is responsible for the lack of Sabbath observance, the Rev. Dr. Ernest M. Stires, rector of St. Thomas's Church, pleaded for "sanctified common sense" in combating materialism in an address yesterday afternoon to the Woman's National Sabbath Alliance at their twenty-eighth anniversary celebration in the Hotel Astor.

Dr. Stires said a great degree of indifference to the religious aspect of Sunday might be blamed upon the indulgent attitude of the clergy.



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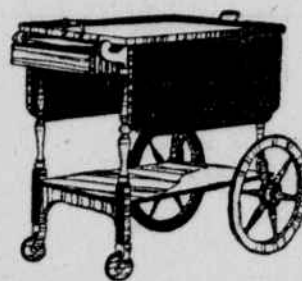
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